

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March XX, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
Room H-307, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger,

As you begin your consideration of the Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations bills, we know you face many conflicting demands on this year's budget. As the United States meets pressing global challenges, we strongly believe that robust U.S. foreign assistance is vital to ensuring our national security interests abroad.

One program that enjoys particularly strong bipartisan backing and for which we, Democrats and Republicans, urge your continued strong support is the full funding of security assistance to Israel as authorized in the 2016 U.S. – Israel Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Foreign military financing and security assistance are provided by appropriations and are subject to Congressional oversight. In addition, our assistance to Israel is governed by the terms of the U.S.-Israel MOU. The expected Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Request of \$3.8 billion in security assistance for Israel - \$3.3 billion in foreign military financing and \$500 million for cooperative missile defense programs - constitutes the fourth year of the ten-year 2016 MOU. This assistance was approved overwhelmingly by Congress in 2020 in the U.S.-Israel Security Assistance Authorization Act (UISAAA), which became law as part of the National Defense Authorization Act. The Act codified the levels of funding set forth in the 2016 MOU. In that spirit, we urge you to support foreign assistance funding, including full funding for Israel's security needs.

Israel continues to face direct threats from Iran and its terrorist proxies. In February, an Israeli-owned ship in the Gulf of Oman was hit by a mysterious explosion that Israel has attributed as an attack by Iran. In 2019, Hizballah launched three anti-tank missiles at an Israeli Defense Forces vehicle in Israel. Hizballah is estimated to have an arsenal of over 130,000 rockets and missiles, and is believed to be developing new precision-guided munitions to be deployed in Lebanon. American security assistance to Israel helps counter these threats, and our rock-solid security partnership serves as a deterrent against even more significant attacks on our shared interests.

Congress is committed to maintaining Israel's qualitative military edge and its ability to defend itself, by itself, against persistent threats. Our aid to Israel is a vital and cost-effective expenditure which advances important U.S. national security interests in a highly challenging

region. For decades, Presidents of both parties have understood the strategic importance of providing Israel with security assistance.

As America's closest Mideast ally, Israel regularly provides the United States with unique intelligence information and advanced defensive weapons systems. Israel is also actively engaged in supporting security partners like Jordan and Egypt, and its recent normalization agreements with the UAE, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco will help promote regional stability and deal with common challenges from Iran and its terrorist proxies.

We recognize that not every Member of Congress will agree with every policy decision of every Israeli government. However as President Biden has stated, "I'm not going to place conditions for the security assistance given the serious threats that Israel is facing, and this would be, I think, irresponsible." Reducing funding or adding conditions on security assistance would be detrimental to Israel's ability to defend itself against all threats. We urge you to fulfill our commitments as agreed to in the 2016 MOU as codified by the UISAAA, and in accordance with all U.S. laws.

Just as foreign assistance is an investment in advancing our values and furthering our global interests, security aid to Israel is a specific investment in the peace and prosperity of the entire Middle East. U.S. support for Israel makes the region a safer place and bolsters diplomatic efforts aimed at achieving a negotiated two-state solution, resulting in peace and prosperity for both Israelis and Palestinians.

We appreciate your leadership on this issue, and we urge your full support for this continued critical investment.

Sincerely,

Ted Deutch
CHAIR, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST,
NORTH AFRICA, AND GLOBAL COUNTERTERRORISM
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Michael T. McCaul
RANKING MEMBER
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS